

REMARKS

This is responsive to the Office Action dated April 29, 2005 in which the Examiner rejects all the pending claims as being obvious over combinations of Geiger et al (US Patent No. 6,073,142), Scannel et al (US Patent No. 5,377,354), Sandhu (“Transaction Control Expressions for Separation of Duties” or “Lattice-Based Access Control Models”) and Hudson et al (US Patent No. 6,055,637) under 35USC §103(a). Applicant has amended independent claim 8 to more clearly define the invention, and respectfully traverses the rejections.

The present invention teaches a novel technique in implementing security policy rule that precludes an action upon an occurrence of a condition. In particular, as taught by the present invention, the rule, which is for precluding the action upon the occurrence of the condition, is loaded to the management software upon the occurrence of the first action, as recited expressly or in similar language in all independent claims 1, 8 and 10. With the teaching of the present invention, when an action is attempted, the rule simply precludes the action without a need to test whether the condition exists since the loading of the rule into the software is triggered by the occurrence of the condition. As explained in the Specification, this brings significant efficiencies as compared to the prior art where the rule is preloaded in the management software before the occurrence of the condition, and thus the management software has to test whether the condition exists each time the action is attempted (see e.g., page 2, lines 5-7).

Applicant respectfully submits that the above underlined distinguishing feature is not obvious over the combinations of the cited references under 35USC §103(a) as asserted by the Examiner, as explained in detail below.

Rejections to independent claims 1 and 8:

Independent claims 1 and 8 are rejected by the Examiner over a combination of Geiger et al (US Patent No. 6,073,142), Sandhu (“Transaction Control Expressions for Separation of Duties”, hereinafter referred to as “Sandhu A”) and Hudson et al (US Patent No. 6,055,637) under 35 USC §103(a). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections, as explained below.

Geiger et al (US Patent No. 6,073,142) discloses an email processing system in which the business communication policies can be automatically applied to control the distribution of the email messages. However, as admitted by the Examiner, Geiger does not disclose either that the rules (policies) are for precluding an action or that the rules are loaded into the data access management software upon an occurrence of a condition. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that Geiger is somewhat remote from the present invention as far as the above underlined distinguishing features in the independent claims 1 and 2 are concerned.

Sandhu A discloses a notation and model based on transaction control expressions for specifying and enforcing separation of duties. More specifically, each user is assigned with a duty and prohibited from other duties. A specific user is always allowed to take an action (e.g., preparing the check), and is always precluded from taking other actions (e.g., approving a check, issuing a check, etc.). Therefore, the rule in Sandhu A is not a conditional rule. More specifically, it is NOT for precluding the user from specified actions (e.g., approving the check, issuing a check, etc.) upon an occurrence of a condition, as required in claims 1 and 2. For example, the user is always precluded from issuing or preparing the check even though he or she has not prepared the check.

Therefore, neither Geiger nor Sandhu teaches how to implement a conditional rule that precludes an action upon an occurrence of a condition. This deficiency cannot be remedied by Hudson et al (US Patent No. 6,055,637), because Hudson does not discuss about a rule that precludes an action upon an occurrence of a condition either. Hudson discloses a resource access control system to permit

a user to get access to a resource each time that the user logs on. In particular, a temporary credential token is generated correlative to the assigned role of the user as the user logs on for accessing the resource. Therefore, the token represents a rule for permitting an action (i.e., accessing to the resource), but NOT for precluding the action.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 8 are not obvious over a combination of Geiger, Sandhu A and Hudson since none of them discloses a rule for precluding an action upon occurrence of a condition, as required in claims 1 and 2. Moreover, Applicant believes that claims 1 and 8 are also not obvious even Sandhu (“Lattice-Based Access Control Models”, herein after referred to as “Sandhu B”) is taken into consideration, either, for the similar reason as explained below in regard to independent claim 10 which is rejected by the Examiner based on such a combination.

Rejection to independent claim 10:

Independent claim 10 is rejected as being obvious over a combination of Geiger, Sandhu B (“Lattice-Based Access Control Models”) and Hudson under 35USC §103(a). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection, as explained below.

As admitted by the Examiner, Geiger does not disclose that the rules (policies) are for prohibiting a party from accessing specified information or that the rules are included into the data access management software upon an occurrence of a condition, which is recited in claim 10 in similar languages.

Sandhu B discloses a “Chinese Wall policy” in which a user will be precluded from accessing to bank B’s information after the user has accessed to bank A’s information (see page 17, cols. 2 –3). However, as admitted by the Examiner, Sandhu B does not teach to upload or include the rule, which

is for prohibiting the access of the specified information, into the management software upon occurrence of a condition as required by independent claim 10 either.

Applicant respectfully submits that the above deficiency cannot be remedied by Hudson, as asserted by the Examiner. In particular, Applicant respectfully submits that no proper motivation or suggestion can be found in any of these references for such a combination so as to conclude the above distinguishing feature of including a rule that prohibits the access to the information into the management software upon occurrence of a condition. Moreover, applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's statements that the above references can be combined to conclude the above-underlined distinguishing feature because of the motivation of maintaining the integrity of the security system given in Hudson (see Office Action, page 4), as explained in detail below.

Hudson's patent is directed to maintain the integrity of the security system, which will be otherwise compromised if a user can get access to the same resource by the identifier and password even if his or her role has changed (see col. 1, lines 42-48). However, the feature of the present invention that a rule prohibiting the access to specified information is included in the management software upon occurrence of a condition cannot be concluded from this motivation of Hudson to maintain the integrity of the security system, as asserted by the Examiner. More specifically, Hudson is directed to solve an integrity problem that may happen in implementing security policies that preclude an action (accessing to the resources) by default, but permit the action only upon occurrence of a condition (user's logging on). This is very different from the situation in the present invention in which the security policies permit an action by default, but preclude the action only upon occurrence of a condition. In particular, in Hudson the token (rule for permitting an action) is generated after the user logs on to avoid integrity problem, i.e., to prevent the user from unauthorized accessing to the resource. However, in the situation of the present invention in which the rule is for precluding or

prohibiting an action upon occurrence of a condition, the rule can either be included in the management software before the occurrence of the condition (such as in the prior art discussed in the Specification of the instant application), or be included in the software after the occurrence of the condition as taught by the present invention. Placing a rule, which precludes an action upon occurrence of a condition, into the management software after the occurrence of the condition does not solve the integrity problem addressed by Hudson, but is able to avoid testing the occurrence of the condition and therefore to improve efficiencies, as suggested in the instant application (see, e.g., page 2, lines 5-7). This motivation can only be found in the present invention, and cannot be found in either Hudson or any other cited patents.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits the motivation of “maintaining the integrity” suggested in Hudson does not suggest that the feature of “generating the token (rule) upon user’s logging on” disclosed in Hudson be applied to “the rule for precluding access to specified information upon occurrence of an action” as disclosed in Sandhu B so as to conclude the distinguishing feature of the present invention that the rule, which is for prohibiting the access to specified information upon an occurrence of a condition, is included in the management software upon the occurrence of the condition, as required in independent claim 10. Therefore, claim 10 is believed non-obvious over the cited references under 35USC §103(a) and is patentable.

For the similar reasons, Applicant believes that independent claims 1 and 8 are also non-obvious over the cited patents 35USC §103(a), and are therefore also patentable.

At least for the same reasons, all other pending claims are also believed patentable since each of them is dependent to, and therefore includes all the limitations in, one of independent claims 1, 8 and 10.

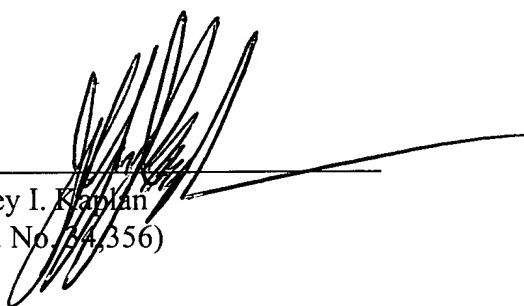
Applicant therefore respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance in view of the above

remarks and amendments. The Examiner is authorized to deduct additional fees believed due from our Deposit Account No. 11-0223.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal service as first class mail, in a postage prepaid envelope, addressed to the Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on July 29, 2005.

Dated July 29, 2005 Signed  Print Name Li Zheng